

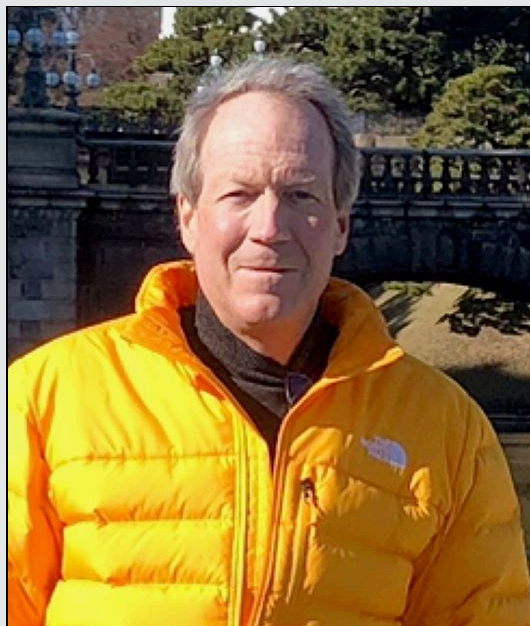
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Department of  
**BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING**

JOHN AND MARCIA PRICE COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING  
THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

## A Message from the Chair



Welcome to the Fall 2025 Utah Biomedical Engineering newsletter! As we close out our Fall 2025 semester and head towards the new year, the first real winter snow is now falling outside – the typical Utah winter is late on arrival this year! While Mother Nature seems to have modified her seasonal pattern this Fall, the campus Fall semester rhythms, routines and vibe have been energetic and invigorating, fulfilling my faculty expectations for vibrant university work and life with our staff, faculty, and students. I try to capture this energy and excitement in our newsletter!

You'll want to check out the current Fall 2025 newsletter links for our BME alumni feature with Dr. Quan Ni, tireless non-profit advocate, co-founder of Inspire Medical and current founder and CEO of Restora Medical Inc. You'll be inspired by BME undergraduate major Brynne Byars' recognition in the University of Utah's third annual Innovation Awards for her dedication and commitment to innovation through her outstanding academic work and research in BME faculty Robby Bowles' lab pursuing a regenerative cure for degenerative disc disease. Brynne's research project interrogates a previously uncharacterized gene that may prove useful in creating more physiologically relevant models of disc degeneration and disease progression. You'll also want to meet new BME faculty, Dr. Kara Johnson, and learn about her neuroengineering research and education plans in her shared BME/Neurosurgery faculty appointment, BME's Karli Gillette's half million dollar grant with her Utah colleagues for new work with digital twin cardiology technologies, and graduate student Tommy McPartlon's biomaterials research synthesizing a mimic of arctic fish blood protein as a new biocompatible antifreeze with possible utility for cryopreserving cells and tissues.

The Price College of Engineering presented their Annual Staff Service Award to Laura Olsen, BME's Graduate Student Advisor for her 15 years of dedicated work making the magic happen with our fleet of Masters and PhD students. Well deserved!!

Then on the podium, there's the feature describing our BME student-organized 20th Annual Utah Biomedical Engineering Conference (UBEC) 2025, showcasing our department's research, innovation and collaboration in a welcoming regional forum integrating government, industry and academia. And once again, in October 2025, Utah BME faculty and students participated in the annual Biomedical Engineering Society (BMES) meeting in San Diego, networking with an international audience of over 5000 biomedical engineers and presenting research work. Our department staffed a prominent, visible exhibitors booth on the floor there. Read about it!

Among our BME student honors, graduate student Tamanna Islam won a coveted NIH Predoctoral Fellowship to support her research to produce new benchtop experimental models for studying pulmonary arterial hypertension. Additionally, BME graduate students Laura Needham and Rui Jin were awarded PCE Graduate Fellowships to pursue their degrees.

Sadly, Gerald “Jerry” Stringfellow, former dean of our College of Engineering and a recognized pioneer in semiconductor and LED technology, passed away recently at age 83.

As BME Chair, I urge you to read through our latest newsletter to experience the dimensions of our BME program and celebrate BME progress and success with our faculty, staff and students!

My Chair’s reminder that you can find our past BME newsletters [here](#). And as always, your financial support of BME student programming, scholarships and research is encouraged and can be accessed [here](#).

Happy holidays!

David Grainger, Ph.D.  
University Distinguished Professor and Chair  
Ole and Marty Jensen Endowed Chair



**BME Alumnus  
Interview with Dr.  
Quan Ni: Co-  
founder of Inspire  
Medical and**

**Current founder  
and CEO, Restora  
Medical Inc.**

[Read more here](#)



**TLO's 2025  
Excellence in  
Innovation  
Undergraduate  
Student Award  
Winner, BME's  
Brynne Byars**

[Read more here](#)



**New BME Faculty,  
Dr. Kara A  
Johnson, ignites a  
neurological  
spark with her  
shared  
Neurosurgery joint  
appointment.**

[Read more here](#)



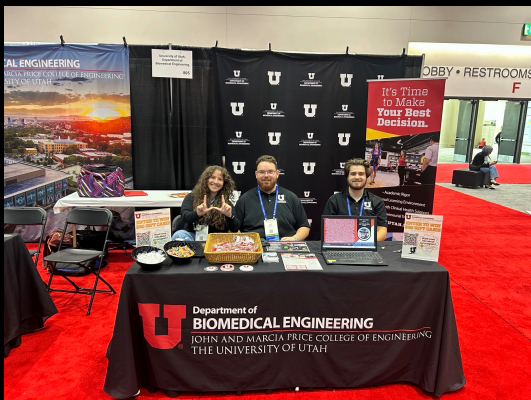
**PCE's Annual Staff Service Award presented to Laura Olsen, BME's Graduate Student Advisor, for 15 years of dedicated work**

[Read more here](#)



**20th Annual Utah Biomedical Engineering Conference (UBEC) 2025: showcasing regional biomedical innovation and collaboration**

[Read more here](#)



**Utah BME faculty and students participate in the annual Biomedical Engineering Society (BMES) meeting in San**

**Diego**

[Read more here](#)



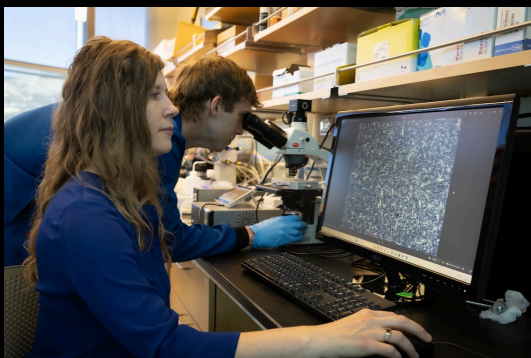
**BME graduate student, Tamanna Islam, granted coveted NIH fellowship to study Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension.**

[Read more here](#)



**BME's Karli Gillette and Utah colleagues receive grant to advance cardiac digital twin technologies.**

[Read more here](#)



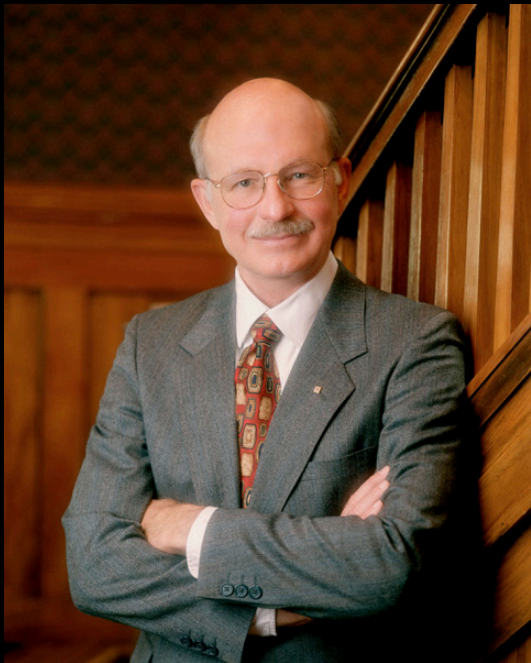
**BME team  
mimics synthetic  
fish blood  
molecule towards a  
bio-compatible  
antifreeze**

[Read more here](#)



**BME students Rui  
and Needham win  
PCoE 2025–26  
graduate  
student fellowships**

[Read more here](#)



**Remembering Dean  
and faculty Gerald  
Stringfellow**

[Read more here](#)

**EXPLORE UofU BME**

**Give to Utah BME**



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